

We offer housing, supportive counseling and assistance to adults recovering from mental health issues which effect their ability to maintain activities of daily living, employment, housing, self-care and/or meaningful relationships with family and friends.



The Regenesiis

Building *Healthy* Communities

respect

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Regeneration

Housing and Support Services

One Member's Story

By Linda Heikkila

There are over seven billion people on the planet, and everyone has a story. At Regeneration Community Services, there are around 400 hundred members, and each one has a story. This is David's.

David grew up on a farm a couple of hours out of Toronto. Even as a child, David worked hard; there were always farm chores to do and David was a son who could be counted on to help anywhere and anytime. David recounts that he was born deaf, and had to have multiple operations before his hearing came. Life on the farm was not easy; and as David grew older, he eventually turned to alcohol as a way to ease his situation. He had also begun experiencing mental health challenges from a young age. David says he was on the way to ruin until he had a son. Having a son inspired David to make positive changes in his life. David says that even as a very young child, his son was wise beyond his years, and would speak to David about having seen God. These words awed David; he felt he had been given a beautiful gift in his son. Sadly, his son had a terminal illness, and died at the age of seven and a half, the day before Christmas. When David



speaks of his son now, he says "He was an angel, a pure angel". This tragedy resulted in David's mental health challenges escalating, and he once again turned to alcohol as a solace. His life became meaningless. Years passed in this manner. Eventually he arrived at "My Brothers Place", a part of Regeneration Community Services, which provides housing for men living with mental health challenges.

Winter 2013

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All his love for hard work that had been an integral part of him as a youth came back as he began to heal, and David realized that for him, feeling pride in his work was the best way to move beyond any mistakes he had made in the past.

David says that moving into our housing has changed his life, and saved his life. David is happiest when he is of service, whether it is cleaning or steaming, and can be counted on to help out with any job, his loving kindness and caring for all members and staff at Regeneration has been a boon to everyone. Thank you, David. We may have changed your life, but you have also changed ours.

Step Down Program

By Jennifer Breckenridge

The Step-down program is excited to announce that since August 1st of this year we have began to move-in tenants into our one bedroom and bachelor units. While we will have 15 people living at Step-down once we are at full capacity, we currently have 7 people living with us at this point. We are hoping that in the early months of 2014 we should be close to having all of our apartments rented and we are looking forward to all of the new energy the new members will bring to Step-down.

Rhonda Skene, one of our wonderful peer support workers at Step-down spoke to two Step-down tenants to find out how they are enjoying living at Step-down. Claudius Sutherland stated that he likes his apartment and that he is learning to relax and that he feels accepted. Claudius told Rhonda that "I like everyone so much that I don't know who to say hi to first when you are all here!" He also said that, "The classes (groups) here are personable and I participate in meditation, Pathways to Recovery and other workshops. The Step-down program and its' staff are able to meet me personally where I am. We all learn from each other and I am relating to the members and feel a safe community with us living and learning at the Step-down program".

Rhonda also spoke to Guiseppina Petti who recently moved in to Step-down. Guiseppina told Rhonda that "the staff here are very supportive and understanding. I like attending all the events and classes. I am happy and content. I finally have my own apartment. It makes me feel real good. I feel like I have accomplished something in life. The staff supports me and is helping me with my shyness".

Andrei Bogdanov, another tenant, told Jennifer Breckenridge that at Step-down the "people are very friendly and it's very comfortable. It gives you a comfort here at Step-down. Just to talk to someone gives you a basis for healing day by day".

Anderson Report

By Peter Yeung

On behalf of the members and staff at Anderson House we would like to wish Michael Lippa a prosperous endeavor at St. Joseph's Health Centre. Anderson House would also like to welcome their new supervisor, Tammy Hutcheson. With Tammy as a new addition to the Anderson House team, together we will continue working hard, empowering and advocating for our members. We would like to thank the strong support from our agency, the community, CAMH, CMHA, Trillium, St.



Michael's and Recon-
n e c t .

At Anderson we believe in empowering our members by providing job opportunities. Such jobs include bagging and tagging garbage on garbage/recycle days, cleaning up dining room, general cleaning in common areas, gardening, putting away groceries, shovelling snow, and many more.

Not only do our members enjoy the work around the house, they also appreciate the organized group excursions. Outings include Saskatoon berry picking at Brooks Farms, movies at Yorkdale Shopping Centre, apple picking at Chudleigh's, pumpkin picking at Coopers Farm, meals at Sushi 168, and Maison Du Japon. Our members inspire staff to come up with new excursion ideas such as our upcoming Christmas tree cutting at Clembrook Christmas Farm. Remaining outings for 2013 will be go-karting and movies. For the early part of 2014, members have expressed interest in visiting Ripleys Aquarium, as well as tubing.





Anderson House has been mentoring co-op students from George Brown, Humber, Seneca, Ryerson and Everest College. Recently we have hired co-op students that we believe would be a positive addition to our team. We would like to congratulate our newly hired permanent part-time staff Elizabeth G, Yvonne B and Andrea J. We also like to welcome our new relief staff Samantha F., Nicole F., Nicole M, James M. and Dillon J.

In light of the recent events and change, "Change is good!"

The Peer Support Program

By Sandra Muir

Peer Support Program Coordinator

The Peer Support Program expanded in the summer to include additional Peer Supporters who are providing Peer Support services at the Step Down program. They have attended different Regen functions since then so perhaps many of you who are reading this have had a chance to meet them.

I would like to take this opportunity to say that the Peer Support program is very pleased to have had Rhonda Skene and Jenny Rosser working in the program since the summer. They have provided excellent Peer Support services to the members at the Step Down program. On behalf of Regen and the Member Involvement Survey Committee, I want to thank all of the Regen members who took the time to fill out the Member Satisfaction Survey! The results of the survey have been compiled and summarized and the Committee will be making those results available to you.

When the results are made available, only the overall or aggregate results of all the Regen member surveys will be provided to those who wish to see them.

The information that was provided on the surveys was extremely valuable as the feedback provided will now be used to determine how Regen can better serve you, the members.

I also want to thank the Member Involvement Survey Committee on behalf of Regen for all the hard work that was put into the creation and the distribution of the survey to the rest of the members. Each time that the committee had met together, they demonstrated that they had the best interests, of all the members, in mind throughout the process of creating the survey. Thank you for your dedication to seeing it through to completion. All of you did an awesome job!!



Congratulating our newest Canadian

By Patricia Koine

An interview with Marlon Newman

Patricia (RCS case manager): Congratulations Marlon on your citizenship. Please tell us how you feel about it.

Marlon (RCS member): Me and Patricia have been working very hard on this and I finally got my citizenship now. So I give God thanks for it. And I wish myself all the best, and to keep on doing good.

Joy Ann (CAMH CCW): What does it mean for you to be a Canadian citizen?

Marlon: It feels very nice. I feel very happy to be a Canadian citizen right now. And I thank God for it.

Joy Ann: What is the best thing about being Canadian?

Marlon: Being around people that treat me good, with love and respect.

Patricia: Congratulations for the journey it took you to this day, July 4, 2013. We are very proud of you. We wish you all the best as a Canadian and may you continue to be the best person that you are.

Marlon: Thank you very much Patricia. I really appreciate all that you have done. And thank you Joy Ann.

Case Management

By Oscar Campos

People always ask me “what do you do as a Case Manager?” I find it troubling answering because I never know how to answer as I cannot frame it in a short manner that encompasses what it is Case manager’s do, so, I pause and say “everything!” If I am able to narrow my response down to a task or two than I recognize that I am limiting my ability to provide support in a wide array of areas. In saying “everything”, I reinforce within myself that my duties when working with members varies in degree. What I like most about being a Case Manager is learning from the member’s. Although my formal educational career has ended, my studies about life continue each day through the interactions of my work with others. I am grateful in learning about strength, courage, perseverance, determination, resilience and love from the member’s I work with.



Addictions Supportive Housing– Breakaway Partnership

By Melissa Pisante

As I come close to being a part of the Addictions Supportive Housing Team for a year, I cannot help but

think back to my first day as an eager new employee ready and willing to give 110% to last week when the idea of grabbing my passport and jumping on the first flight anywhere was a very real possibility. Although one year may seem like a relatively small amount of time, anyone in the field of social services will be all too familiar with the intensity, chaos and perplexity that is demanded by the work we do..

This being said, as I reflect on my time as a case manager with Breakaway Addiction Services my conclusion remains the same: what we do is not only important but necessary. This importance and necessity is not for our own egos, resumés or agency policies but is of great value and worth because of the population we serve.

I am amazed how each day can include the harsh and unkind reality that dependence on substances can foster while forcing me to watch in awe the unbelievable resilience and indomitable spirit of the people I work with. As a housing worker I am allowed access into a world few people consider entering. It is that access that has transformed my values into my beliefs. I have witnessed firsthand the impact of housing, both on a physical and emotional level. It is not simply about having somewhere to go at the end of the day. It is about having a space that is your own; a space that is not created or defined by use, substances or status. This opportunity gives someone a chance to dictate life on their own terms when so often they were told who they were and what they were worth by people watching from afar.

But it is not just about how I see things. I think it would be better served to hear what being part of this program has brought to its members. One of the people I am happy to work with is Michelle, who has been a member of the Supportive Housing program for the last 2 years. Before that she lived on the streets, constantly in and out of jail and dependant on drugs. She says that if it wasn't for housing she would "... be dead - no ifs ands or buts about it". As her worker I have seen her make tremendous strides with courage, determination and reflection. Since being housed she has stayed out of jail, is regularly seeing a physician for some serious health concerns, has not used any drugs or alcohol in four months and is thinking about going to school for addictions counselling. If you were to ask her, she would tell you that the steps she has taken were hers to take because "choices are yours once you get a place".

She has been able to create a life for herself that she always wanted but did not know how to get. She was living on the streets at the age of 11 and it wasn't until her 40th birthday when she was told there was a place available for her. It was only then when she felt like

someone cared, "someone choosing to help me and not even knowing me". For Michelle, being moved into a furnished unit made the next decision, whatever it may have been, up to her. And that is what, for me, the work I do is about: creating a safe space for people that allows and supports them to make their own choices.

Being able to be a support from the very beginning and watch as someone's life become their own is a feeling that goes beyond the professional realm. I have learned more from working with and supporting people like Michelle than I ever thought possible. The existence of our program allows an opportunity to transform not only the lives of its members but of the staff as well.

A Typical Day in Intensive Case Management

By Patricia Koine

Typical day! What! There is no typical day in intensive case management!

As part of the RCS Intensive Case Management Team (ICM) in partnership with CAMH & St. Joseph's Hospital and more recently picking referrals from Access 1, our Manager Maureen and colleagues – Terry, Janette, Margo, Azy, Lisa, Sade, & Slyvie and I will tell you that no two days are alike!

Our ICM team is guided by the Recovery Model drawing valuable approaches from a report by Mike Slade, "rethink – 100 ways to support recovery" A guide for mental health professionals (www.rethink.org/100ways). Two beliefs form the basis of the report. recovery.

"First, recovery is something worked towards and experienced by the person with mental illness and not something services can do the the person. Staff contribution is to support the person in their journey towards recovery."

"Second, the journey of recovery is individual and it varies from person to person. There is no "right" service or step-by-step instructions for how recovery can be supported by mental health staff."

Further, our ICM team understands that supporting recovery involves moving away from a focus on treating illness and towards promoting well-being. Hence each day we work with the understanding that people who have lived with mental illness can be supported through a personal recovery framework on the following four recovery tasks:

Hope as a frequent self-reported aspect of recovery
Self-identity including current and future self-image
Meaning in life, including life purpose and goals

Personal Responsibility – the ability to take personal responsibility for one’s own life.

www.rethink.org/100ways

Armed with the framework above, I set to work daily with a backpack of flexibility, positive attitude, patience, calm, clear mind, creativity, versatility, fair and firm boundaries, a humble heart, a smile and respect for self and all others encountered daily at work and in the lives of our members. Some people though must earn my respect, as systemic barriers and archaic attitudes of stigma in mental health are encountered and tackled.

From assessments to reassessments, from goal setting to goal achievement or adjustments, from building trust to stepping back as members make steady strides on their recovery journey no matter how miniscule, support is provided alongside life skills. Considerable time goes towards medical appointments to deal with multiple physical health issues and complications.

It is admirable to watch our members as they steer their recovery journey to personal satisfaction in areas such as and not limited to:

- Housing
- Income
- Employment
- Advocacy
- Health (physical, dental and mental)
- Personal and Interpersonal Relationships
- Peer Support
- Legal
- Education & Art
- Trips and Boundless adventures
- Social Recreation
- Coping strategies with loss or other setbacks in life

On behalf of the ICM Team and Manager, we wish all members Happy Holiday and another year to look forward to in 2014.

Oakwood Arch

By Daniel Martins

Oakwood Arch Member’s Association Co-Chair

Ahh, journaling... not my best skill, but, I do tend to think a lot. Let me start by saying it is a great honor to have the opportunity to be asked to chronicle the journey and wellbeing of the Members of Oakwood ARCH (aka 1674 Eglinton). Since its inception, development and occupancy of the sleek building designed to house 40 people, life has been tranquil (Sic*) and it has been quite the experience from one thing to the other (from our elevator that is full of personality to our quirky front door and the list goes on... but not too long).

Transforming a small space to a thriving community is

not a small task due to the various personalities and life experience that we, the Members of Oakwood ARCH have; but, I must say that it was meant to be. I have done a lot of reflecting and to me, what makes Oakwood ARCH a unique environment, are the people who occupy the space. From the staff, to members, to community partners, we all are family; we are all working together and committed to one another. We have broken the mould of the stereotypical “group living environment” and are not that in any way, shape or form. We consider ourselves to be close friends, uncle’s aunts, brothers and sisters working together as a team and learning from one another as we embark on our own journey toward recovery. It is a magical place that is full of understanding, empowerment and mutual respect that encourages us to take risks (that we would not otherwise do) in a safe and supportive environment.

Structuring daily activities have been quite the challenge due to the various and many interests of the members. Fortunately, our tenacious and dedicated Peer support workers, social workers, residential support workers, cooks, cleaners and doctors have been able to cater to each of us as individuals with 100% focus. This, I must say, is not the easiest thing to do but we always do our best to make sure that every day is a success in our journey to recovery both individually and together as a community.

Since we have hit full capacity, certain new and exciting programs are beginning to come into fruition. Don’t get me wrong we haven’t been sitting idle these last many months, we’ve done lots! From outings; to bbq’s; to dance parties on the roof we have made great strides getting to know one another

One exciting update that I am proud to inform you of is that our Member’s Association is flourishing. It is the place where we can have our say in the daily operation of the community that we all call home. We meet on a monthly basis to create program policies, explain certain rules (and why we feel they are important), and review regulations, complaints and requests (All in good fun I might add). On a good month, we get a really good turnout and it is wonderful to see so many members actively involved in the governance of their community. I must say, it’s not easy running the board, but it’s a learning experience for both myself and my co-chair.

On a personal note living here at Oakwood ARCH has been empowering for me. I have come a long way in my journey toward recovery and am thankful for the opportunity I have been given. I feel so fortunate to be surrounded by such wonderful and caring people who have all believed in me and helped me discover my true potential (to the point that I am in the position to be writing this). Thanks everyone and I wish you all a fun filled year end celebration and all the best in the coming year.

What's Happening at Regen

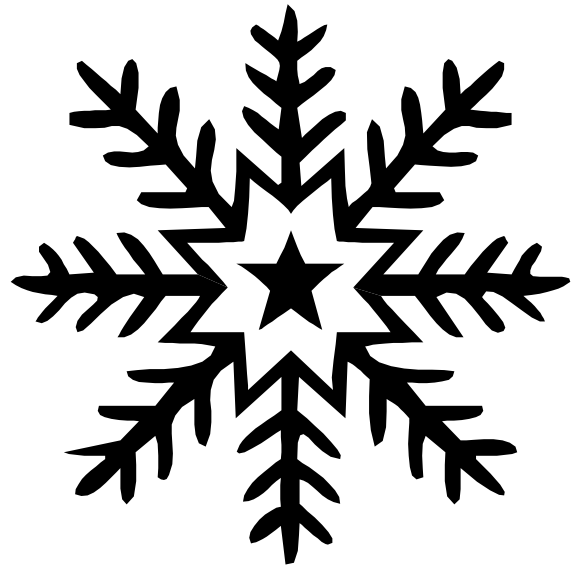


Summer/Fall Outings and Events

CNE at Exhibition Toronto
Stratford
Halloween Parties

In Memory of Members 2013

Martin Baird



One snowflake

- Yes, you are wonderful! But what's the aim of your existence?

- I simply live enjoying liberty cause I am not tamed by any resistance.

- Yes, you are beautiful! But how are you filling your time from day to day?

- I split my time into the everlasting rhyme and catch my Creator's holy ray while I pray.

- Indeed, you are distinguished in the awesome way! But would you say to all of us what good are you doing for the christian mass?

- Indeed not much. I am the little snowflake or likeness of the green grass, which is not even noticed, when all the saints are taking number six bus and rushing out of the unreal worship into the real world ship.

--

Andrei (Boris) Bogdanov



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